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JPRS L/8355

27 March 1979

TRANSLATIONS ON NEAR EAST AND NORTH AFRICA
(FOUO 10/79)

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NORTH AFRICAN AFFAIRS

SAHARAN WAR CAUSING DETERIORATING CONDITIONS IN MOROCCO

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French 19 Feb - 4 Mar 79 p 18

[Article by Said Ould Khelifa: "The Polisario in the Square"]

[Text] At a time when, within the framework of the "Operation Houari-Boumediene," the Liberation Army of the Saharan People is carrying the war into southern Morocco, the social situation continues to deteriorate in the Cherifian Kingdom.

The series of strikes which have successively affected urban and rail transportation, the mining sector and the communal civil service, have just won over various sectors of the teaching profession as well.

The permanent confrontation for which the University and the secondary schools have been serving as the theater of operations has come to an end, in fact, because of the mobilization of most of the professors. The latter have decided to join the struggle being waged by the working masses, and this in spite of the endeavors of the USFP [expansion unknown] administrators to minimize the effect of such an action.

The efforts of Attorney Bouabid to dampen the confrontation, which is winning over ever increasing segments of the Moroccan people, could not help but fail, moreover.

The most capable demagog, even if he were a member of the "opposition," could not indefinitely cover up a social reality that has in fact become untenable for the majority of the Moroccan people.

When the Cherifian monarch entered into secret compacts with Madrid and Nouakchott for the division of Western Sahara, the multinationals had made a run for this windfall. Hassan II had had the Saharan phosphates flaunted before them, a "goldmine" which the Atkins and Partners Corporations (of Great Britain)

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and SONASID [expansion unknown] (of France), among others had proposed to convert into alaouite ore. Ryad, a financial backer of the Cherifian Monarchy, was to make a large contribution.

Today the desert adventure has turned out badly, and the taste for Saharan phosphates has suddenly become too bitter for foreign investors. What is more, the repressive regime established in the Saharan territories has not given the king the least guarantee of control in that area.

The Moroccan soldiers have never been able to venture out of their camps in Western Sahara without running the risk of falling into an ambush set by those whom Rabat calls the "hordes of a certain Polisario Front." The official circles, of course, refuse as usual to recognize that the latter is a structured force in its own right, and that it constitutes the spearhead of a people whom secret diplomatic bargaining had tried to dispossess from their territory.

But this stubborn refusal has itself become ridiculous. Every day it is sanctioned by the large numbers of leaded caskets being returned to the families of the deceased with the single notation: "Accidental death." All these "accidents" have one detail in common: the impact of a bullet.

The Moroccan people are not fools; the Palace is multiplying its visits to Mobutu, Sadat, Bongo and their associates to try to find as soon as possible the most advantageous solution to the impasse into which the king has maneuvered himself, especially since Nouakchott has been showing evident signs of hesitation on the subject of pursuing the Saharan affair any further.

When the Mauritanian president, Ould Saleck, let it be known that he wanted to negotiate directly with Saharan leaders, the Court tried, by all the means in its power, to make Nouakchott toe the line.

Quite recently once again, the Mauritanian "Numero Uno" declared in the columns of an Algerian weekly, for the benefit of the Saharans: "Have confidence in us, for we feel your sufferings as deeply as if they were our own." (Interview granted to ALGERIE ACTUALITE).

For their part, the Saharans, by carrying out the most bloody raid ever suffered by the soldiers of the FAR [Royal Armed Forces], on the Moroccan town of Tan-Tan, have just struck a heavy blow at the abusive propaganda constantly used by the Rabat Government. And the progressivist circles confirm that the shock even shook the Throne seriously. The underhanded royal intrigues directed against Algeria (the setting of bombs in Maghnia and

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Oran, the parachute drops of arms at Cape Sigli), from this point of view only confirmed the disorder reigning in Rabat.

Today the fact of the Saharan people can be neither denied nor passed over in silence. At a time when destitution and war are accelerating the deterioration of the social climate, will Hassan II still be able to hush up much longer a truth which will henceforth assert itself by the force of arms?

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ALGERIA

PRESS CHARGED WITH SLANTING NEWS

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French 5-18 Feb 79

[Unattributed article: "French-Algerian Relations"]

[Text] Tendentious campaign seeks to twist facts to give political coloration to commercial transaction.

The slanted interpretation--on the part of a certain segment of the French press--of the recent accord concluded between SONATRACH [National Company for the Transport and Marketing of Hydrocarbons] and a French-Italian consortium, made up of Technip [expansion unknown] and ENI [National Hydrocarbon Agency] for the equipment to be used in the natural gas liquefaction installations at the third plant in Arzew, with an annual capacity of 15.75 billion cubic meters, was condemned in strong terms by Algerian government circles in a commentary from APS [Algerian Press Service]. The first contract involves F356 million and the second one involves F2.5 billion in the form of a purchaser loan as well as \$400 million in the form of an open loan.

Addressing itself directly to the article by the Algiers correspondent of the daily LE MONDE, APS declared that, if one were to believe that newspaper, the conclusion of the recent accords between SONATRACH, Technip, and ENI is nothing but the result of two factors: on the one hand, the rejection, by the American administration, of two Algerian gas sales contracts; on the other hand, the impossibility of getting the financing for the GNL-3 [expansion unknown] complex which Algeria now faces.

"In other words," APS noted, "LE MONDE intends to hint to its readers that SONATRACH was made to deal with a French enterprise after the doors had been closed to it everywhere else." Now, Algeria, many months ago, definitely sold, on American and European markets, all of the volumes of natural gas indicated in the program which it had drawn up and which it launches 5 years ago.

As a result of this situation, which was known to all experts in the field and all observers, "except of course those at LE MONDE," the decisions of

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the American administration last month, the moment they were officially announced, had already been outdated a long time ago and could not influence the progress of a gas program of Algeria, a program which takes its course in a normal manner and in its entirety."

In the mean time, the construction contract for the GNL-3 complex, which is involved here, was signed 2 years ago with the Foster Wheeler enterprise and the selection of Technip was made within the context of this contract of which it is only a part since its purpose concerns only the choice of the liquefaction method. "In second place," APS added, "LE MONDE itself admitted, just a few weeks ago, the moment SONATRACH got a commitment from several banking consortiums, for financing loans coming to \$2.5 billion American dollars, that Algeria had no difficulty in getting the financing necessary for the implementation of its development program."

The fact is that SONATRACH only had to choose between firm offers coming from Japanese, Western, especially French, American, and Canadian, banking organizations: "If it is the French offer which was definitely picked," APS notes, "this is simply because this offer provided the best grouping of technical, commercial, and financial conditions, apart from any political consideration of any kind whatsoever." Besides, it is significant to recall that, for the past 3 weeks, SONATRACH, one by one, signed four contracts all of which pertain to the sale and processing of gas, with Japanese and American enterprises, which won the orders as part of an international competition in which French enterprises were also involved, including Technip. The four contracts, completely financed by Japanese and American banks and loan institutions, amount to \$1.2 billion.

"Why, then, try to twist the facts," APS asks itself, "in order to give any kind of political coloration to a transaction whose processing never went beyond the bounds of the economic and commercial field? We have learned to hear French commentators attribute any trade agreement between Algeria and non-French enterprises to hostility on the part of Algeria. We have also increasingly heard them interpret any success by a French enterprise on the Algerian market as a kind of commercial surrender by Algeria.

"Do these commentators have so little confidence in the commercial aptitude of French enterprises to try to make us believe that they are incapable of winning orders solely on the basis of the interplay of economic and commercial factors? Or did they yield once again to that mania which dominates them in their vision of Algerian-French relations, a mania which handicaps them to the point of rendering them incapable of envisaging the development of trade between France and Algeria other than according to the scheme of their unfulfilled dream, the dream of an Algeria on its knees, at the feet of a triumphant France?"

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IRAN

PARIS MAGAZINE INTERVIEWS IRANIAN LEADER AYATOLLAH SHARI'AT MADARI

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 9 Mar 79 pp 38, 39 JN

[Interview with Iranian religious leader Ayatollah Shari'at Madari by Faris Bazzi, correspondent of AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI, in Qum--date not given]

[Excerpts] [Question] You eminence, what is your opinion of the current circumstances in Iran?

[Answer] The first thing the revolution did was to get rid of the monarchy for good. This is one of the revolution's major achievements. The corrupt edifice has been demolished. The revolution is now setting up a new edifice to replace the old one.

[Question] As you know, it has often been said that there are differences between you and Aytollah Khomeyni. It is said that you agree on objectives but differ on tactics.

[Answer] Khomeyni was abroad while we were here. Therefore, he had the freedom to make statements while we did not. We faced the tanks and fire. Also, due to the lack of contact, we could not coordinate our stands; hence, the difference in tactics. The differences, of course, are on secondary matters. We have agreed on the objective right from the beginning, as for press interpretations, this is another matter.

[Question] Iran is facing great challenges not only in building the new state but also in the continuous attempts to destroy the institutions of the previous government. How do you view the outside dangers that are continuously threatening the state?

[Answer] Outside challenges are not that important, although we are aware of their danger. The Iranians who succeeded in facing the shah's regime, which was backed by outside forces, have achieved a big victory. They will certainly be able to face such challenges and triumph over them. What concerns us most are the internal changes; in other words, the economic problems left by the previous government. Economically, we are almost bankrupt.

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[Question] There are accusations that the United States has links with certain departments and forces inside Iran and that it is lying in wait for the new regime. What do you say to that?

[Answer] Such accusations could be true of both Western and Eastern powers. But we do not have any official evidence proving that the United States continues to interfere in Iran's internal affairs. At any rate, the Iranians are always alert to the danger of outside interference.

[Question] It is understood that certain internal forces, both leftist and nonleftist, have opposed new appointments in the army. These forces have demanded that they be included in the Revolutionary Council and the government. What is your opinion on that?

[Answer] The revolution is living its first days and going through its first phase. Therefore, it needs a long time to strengthen and stabilize. If there are demands to participate in the government, these will have to be considered at a later stage, not now, but after the revolution has become relatively stable. Furthermore, there is bound to be opposition to recent appointments. As you know, leaders do not descend from heaven. The cause for this opposition and hue and cry is that the government is not yet strong enough to take things under control. This gives others the opportunity to declare their opposition, whether it is justified or not. We admit that this opposition is one of the main problems facing the government, but it does not constitute a big danger. It is a problem which can be solved.

[Question] What bases do you consider essential for building a strong and independent Iranian army, and is there a possibility of diversifying the sources of armaments for the new army such as obtaining arms from the Soviet Union?

[Answer] As you know, almost half of the army men have returned to their barracks. The new army will be built qualitatively and quantitatively. In the past, the people and the Ulema did not consider the army and armed forces as part of them. The army was alien to the people. In the past also, citizens did not join the army out of desire or conviction. They were driven to the army by special circumstances as is the case in many developing countries.

Now that the army belongs to the people, citizens will join it out of a true and complete desire and conviction and also out of their faith in the defense of the homeland. This time, the army will be of the people and for the people.

Regarding the second part of your question, the arms now available in Iran are more than we need. Our differences with the United States, for instance, do not mean that we refuse to use U.S. arms. If it becomes necessary in the future to purchase other types of weapons which we would need, the government would purchase them from any source which the government believes would serve the interest of the people.

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[Question] Some of the news media believe that Iran is heading toward an Islamic dictatorship.

[Answer] If an Islamic republic is established in accordance with the teachings of Islam--and this is what we are striving for, God willing--such a republic will not be a dictatorship, but will be ruled by the people. The institutions of such a republic will be established through free elections. Democracy in this republic will not be like Western democracies, but will be similar to them. In Islam, the people are the source of power. They will freely elect their representatives who, in turn, will appoint the government. Thus it will be a popular government. If we are naming it the Islamic republic, it is because the basic law of this republic will be derived from the teachings of Islam. Islamic justice is against dictatorship.

[Question] Allow me to ask your opinion on certain matters related to Iranian foreign policy. What kind of support will the Iranian revolution give to the Palestinian revolution, for instance; how do you view the current talks to solve the Palestine question peacefully?

[Answer] Iran is currently going through difficult and critical circumstances. It may need assistance itself. Therefore, our assistance to the Palestinian revolution will be within the limits of our circumstances and resources. Regarding the second part of your question, we only understand peace to mean the removal of aggression. There was no state on the map called Israel that negotiations would be held with it for everyone to achieve his own rights. In our opinion, peace will be achieved when the usurper ends the usurpation.

[Question] How will the new Iranian regime deal with the question of Dhofar, where Iran had forces stationed?

[Answer] The revolution has announced that Iran will not henceforth play the role of policeman which it undertook under the shah. Iranian forces have been withdrawn from Dhofar, and this demonstrates the revolution's position.

[Question] A final question, your eminence. What will be the fate of the agreements which the shah concluded with neighboring states, especially the agreement to supply gas to the USSR in return for the development of the Iranian iron and steel industry?

[Answer] We adhere to international law and will not go against it. We will consider these agreements in light of the Iranian people's interests and then decide their final fate.

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IRAN

IRAN CALLED HOPE OF CONTEMPORARY ISLAM

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 7 Feb 79 pp 72, 73

[Article by Hichem Djait, Tunisian historian: "Iran, the Hope of Contemporary Islam"]

[Text] I am neither Iranian, nor am I an Iranian affairs expert. But I am an intellectual of Muslim origin, having retained a profound Islamic sensitivity; I spent 15 years of my life studying the civilization of Islam, studying it, thinking about it. Reflecting on the future of Islam, modern Iran, Turkey, and Islamic India were at the focus of my concern because this is where the dilemmas of the old world first were confronted with Western modernity. This is why the Iranian tragedy is so profoundly interesting to me. This is one of the gigantic historic events which, moreover, was absolutely unexpected. If this action should succeed in founding an Islamic government, this will be proof that it is possible to reconcile the spiritual aspect and history (contrary to the case of Russia, Japan, and China), rather than going beyond the Western model. If it fails in fact then this will be magnificent evidence, valid for all humanity. Neither Nasserism, nor pseudo-liberalism, nor Marxism ever seemed to me to be operative for the world of Islam. I always thought that Islam should find in itself the principles for its renewal and it should also thus constitute a universal example. Now, Sunnite Islam and Arab Islam proved incapable because they are ritualist and nationalist but without any intellectual content and the Arab world after all, since the Omayyads never assumed responsibility and sovereignty. This is a world that is too old and too new at the same time, a world whose cultural aspiration has been extinct for a long time.

Europeanization

As for Turkey, there is nothing to hope for there. The Ottoman Empire never developed a culture. It was dominant, scattered military, bureaucratic, too close to Europe. Turkey succumbed to the temptation of narrow nationalism and the temptation of Europeanization.

Because the shah blindly embarked upon the road of depersonalizing modernization, he cut the Iranian nation off from the rest of the Muslim world and

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from its most authentically assumed essence. We must be happy that this return of Iran to its own Islamic identity is not being accomplished according to an unbridled road of religiosity but rather as a revolution issuing from the depths and nevertheless a well-thought-out, slow and synthetic revolution.

Iran was the second element of a bipolar civilization, the Arab-Islamic civilization which one should actually call Arab-Persian civilization. When that civilization, in the process of its development, reached classicism (9th-11th centuries), this was due to the combined action of the Arab element and the Persian element.

Islamic Democracy

Through conquest, the Arabs founded a vast unified domain; they introduced their language and their religion. The Persians, on the other hand, fertilized this civilization through their techniques, their experience in government, their intellectual and artistic output. It is also wrong to say that grand Islam was above all Arabic or above all Persian. Both of them were needed at the same time--because Iran was a central nucleus of grand Islam, because it was never colonized, because it is Shiite, because it experienced its Islam in isolation and amid lack of comfort--due to linguistic distance and the modernist fascination--because, finally, it is a structured country, a real country, a rich country, because of all that it in fact represents the primordial test of contemporary Islam. Finally, the real problem is posed here specifically, the problem of relations between tradition and modern times, between history and values, and, finally, the possibility of a Muslim state to emerge from childhood by seeing itself as such. After all, there is a Christian democracy in Europe (Italy, Germany, postwar France). Who can deny that the principles of the French Revolution are not the transposition of the principles in the Gospel? Why not dream of a democracy of the Islamic type in our case? Nothing comparable to it exists in Saudi Arabia and in the Arab countries in general, where they are satisfied with reactivating a narrowly interpreted theocracy or, quite simply, bringing back good old oriental despotism. But something that would assure fundamental liberties and alternation of the teams in power with the necessary--nonmanipulated approval of the majority (the prime elements in any democracy), all of that guided along an Islamic direction: values of solidarity, brotherhood, links with the past, a blueprint for social justice, the ethics of austerity, a passion for culture. Just look at Christianity: through its metamorphoses it produced the early Church, with its simplicity, as well as Byzantium, with its pomp and its cruelty, as well as the medieval system and, in the end, the current of Christian democracy which itself is diverse and varied. In the current situation in Iran, Islam is pulled by a powerful popular current but it is also inspired by a desire for unanimity, by the spirit of reform, by a positive vision of the government. The entire world is conspiring against this movement which I do not believe, for the moment, will be retrograde. The United States to begin with, but also the Soviet Union and China, the Western intellectuals are silent, with a few exceptions, because the problem is beyond their usual mental patterns. The Arabs also [are

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silent] either because they think they can monopolize Islam or because, on the left, they exist, without knowing it, in the narrowest intellectual dependence on a certain West.

The world cannot do anything against the indomitable will of a people. But only those revolutions succeed which the old structures help in coming about by agreeing to fade away themselves. The biggest service which Reza Pahlevi and the supporters of the imperial order could render would be definitely to fade away, leaving Iran to its furors, to its hopes, and to its new destiny.

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MOROCCO

TREATMENT OF MOROCCAN POLITICAL PRISONERS CRITICIZED

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French 5-18 Feb 79 p 36

[Article by Christine Jouvin: "Who Remembers?"]

[Text] Many are the ignored martyrs of the popular struggle. Returning from Morocco, a French woman militant talks--so that they will not be forgotten.

Because he was unable to get the proper care, Brahim Zaidi has just died of sickness, held in a cell. The doctor and the male nurses remained deaf to his appeals, as did the warden of Lahlou prison at Rabat to whom, 6 days before his death, Zaidi had addressed a letter beginning with this traditional Arab phrase: "It is a pleasure for me to address myself to your benevolence..." (letter reproduced in Bulletin No 9 of the file "Died in Prison" of the Committee for the Fight Against Repression in Morocco).

He died after spending 4 months in the Rabat civilian prison and after being held secretly for 4 years "within the earth," as he himself put it, frequently tortured, blindfolded, in handcuffs.

Brahim Zaidi and his comrades are an old story: the story of the armed uprising of 3 March 1973 in the Middle Atlas at Dar Bou Azza, and in the High Atlas, at Goulmima. The repression which the insurgents of 3 March underwent and continue to undergo was ferocious. The victims, it is true, were recruited not so much among the college students and intellectuals but rather among the little people--all of these specifically "unclassifiables" in the rural areas and the slums of the Third World who in the end rise up in revolt.

The struggle against repression apparently does not escape class prejudices. Did we really worry a lot about the fate of the hundreds of peasant families who during that year of 1973 were forcibly removed from the Kenifra region in order to be kept for many years in hangars at the airports of Anfa, Casablanca, where many died and many were born, uprooted and in the most complete desolation?

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Did we make it sufficiently clear that we estimate the number of 1973 prisoners at 3,000? Did we talk enough about the "hot" executions during the months following the uprising and the "cold" executions following thereafter, in the summer of 1974? Like that young history professor, Meliani, my colleague at a high school in Mouley Ismail, who was executed after the government had taken 2 years to think about that.

Did we talk enough about the incredible Kenitra trial in 1973 at the end of which the "acquitted"--joyfully and with relief awaited by their families and their lawyers--were taken away the moment they left the court and were put into canvas-topped trucks, only to return several months later, and without explanation, for a new trial?

Torture Houses

Scores of persons, perhaps hundreds, are fighting, disappearing, or dying in Morocco--some of them after the 1965 mutinies at Casablanca, others following the attempted coups d'etat in 1971 and 1972--if they are not still held "in the interior of the land," in the basements of torture mansions, in the convict prisons in the South, until death relieves them.

Brahim Zaidi is dead. Many other political prisoners in Moroccan prisons--both official and secret--are facing the risk of meeting the same end. What are we doing in the West and in all of the countries that unconditionally support the regime of Hassan II so that human dignity may no longer be trampled under foot in Morocco?

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MOROCCO

MOROCCAN TRADE-UNION PROBLEMS DISCUSSED

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French 5-18 Feb 79 pp 36, 37

[Article by Omar Nasser: "Crisis in the Unions"]

[Text] In the context of a political, economic, and social conflict, who will benefit from rivalry between the UMT [Moroccan Labor Federation] and the CDT [Democratic Labor Confederation]?

After having been stifled in the name of "national unity" for several years, popular struggles resumed in Morocco carried forward by entirely new dynamics. The absence of any program capable of bringing the crisis under control, slowing inflation--whose repercussions are enormous for low-income people incapable of coping with the constant rise in prices on daily necessities--and putting an end to the increase in unemployment, which now involves 1.3 million persons--all of these factors have placed the Moroccan political parties in one of the most critical positions. Faced with the difficulty of defending their own interests against the disaffection of the masses, they tried to establish new types of relationships with their militant rank and file, necessarily going through a revival of the demand movements.

As far as political strikes are concerned, the leadership groups had to reckon with a radicalist current, aimed at a refusal of compromises and a rejection of any attempt at a justification of the current situation. This certainly emerged very clearly during the congress of the USFP [expansion unknown] that all elements of this political crisis were expressed most clearly. The CDT thus blamed responsibility for the decline of labor union congresses upon the "bureaucracy" of Mahjoub Ben Seddick (UMT) which, according to it, is incapable of elevating the worker struggle to the level of concerns aroused by the widespread and serious economic and social crisis.

The CDT went even further in underscoring the crumbling of the political and labor union base of the USFP which it blames on the reformist line of Abderrahim Bouabid.

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In line with its positions, the CDT has been an element of by no means negligible pressure upon the other political and labor union organizations which were accused of losing the confidence of the masses. The particularly severe tone of the political resolution of the USFP congress, as well as the wave of strikes sweeping over the Sherifian kingdom bear witness to this new labor union awareness.

Work stoppages began last November at Casablanca with the strike of the urban transit drivers. This movement extended over more than a week and paralyzed the transportation network. The authorities tried to break it up by calling in the intercity buses but that only created other problems. As a matter of fact, the lack of experience of drivers not used to driving in the city caused numerous collisions, in particular causing fatalities among a group of school students. An agreement was finally signed with the strikers on 15 December but the authorities did not abide by that agreement and the strike movement resumed shortly afterwards.

Sahara Problem

However, the most important strike in the history of Morocco undoubtedly was the strike of the railroad workers which began on 4 January and which extended over 16 days. Triggered in response to an appeal from the radical current of workers at the National Railroad Company, this strike was aimed at winning a 15-percent wage hike. The authorities decided to give in, on the condition however that this wage hike be made in two increments of 7.5 percent, each. Parallel to that, other work stoppages were recorded in the national education institutions throughout the territory.

Certain observers were afraid however that the rivalry between the two labor union headquarters would only play into the hands of the government. Indeed, the latter might be tempted, in one way or another, to turn this competition to its own advantage in order to get a breathing spell for itself.

Although it is seriously influenced by the economic and social crisis, the domestic situation nevertheless is affected by the problem of the Western Sahara whose solution could help lead to a "new democratic way," contrary to what Abderrahim Bouabid said in his report to the administrative commission of the USFP.

Finally, the events in Iran undeniably have a direct affect on the regime in Rabat which currently, it seems, is looking for a new policy better adapted to the situation.

It is certainly not the shah (whom Hassan II recently received at Marrakech) who can offer good advice because he had to flee his own kingdom after the revolt of his people.

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MOROCCO

1979 BUDGET REFLECTS SELECTIVE AUSTERITY POLICY

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 2 Feb 79 p 247

[Article: "Morocco's 1979 Budget"]

[Text] Faced with a difficult economic situation, the Moroccan authorities were prompted to adopt for the budget of fiscal 1979, the subject of the finance law of 30 December 1978, a policy of selective austerity applying both to operating expenses and capital outlays.

Public expenditures which represented an important element of the expansionary program of the 1973-77 period with an average growth of 35 percent a year were thus reduced for the current year to a level that is more compatible with the possibilities of financing. Similarly, capital outlays have been limited to covering projects initiated before 1978.

Such financial austerity should help reduce the deficit in the external current account. The downward revision of the general import program has already had as its effect to reduce by 25 percent the negative balance of foreign trade: 6.2 million [sic] Moroccan dirhams in 1978 compared to 8.5 billion [sic] in 1977. Repatriation of the savings of migrant Moroccan workers made it possible to reduce the deficit of the external current account to 5 million [sic] dirhams in 1978 compared to 8.2 billion [sic] in 1977 (down about 40 percent).

The government continues to be the principal investor and the programs are for the most part conditioned on the securing of outside assistance, an alternative which in the years to come will add to the size of the public debt.

Comparison of the two general budgets for 1978 and 1979 is thus as follows (in millions of dirhams with one dirham equal to 1.10 French francs, approximately):

	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>
Revenues (estimates)	19,078	19,564
Expenditures	19,477	21,558
Estimated deficit	- 399	- 1,994

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The various supplementary budgets (Port of Casablanca, other ports, the radio-television network, and the Government Printing Office) total, in terms of revenues and expenditures, 1.1 billion dirhams (1 billion in 1978).

The anticipated tax revenues in 1979 are represented by direct taxes--3.5 billion dirhams (up 0.3 billion); customs duties--2.6 billion dirhams (down 0.3 billion); domestic consumption taxes and sales taxes--4.8 billion (up 0.8 billion); profits from the Moroccan Phosphates Office--0.4 billion (down 0.5 billion); the yield from domestic loans and capital equipment bonds--0.8 billion; inflows from foreign borrowings--5.5 billion dirhams (these two revenues being identical to those in the 1978 budget).

As far as expenditures are concerned a comparison of the two budgets for 1978 and 1979 is as follows (in millions of dirhams):

	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>
Operating expenditures	9,469	10,622
Investment credits	8,128	8,736
Servicing of the public debt	1,880	2,200
Total	19,477	21,558

The increase in operating expenditures was restricted over-all to 13 percent compared to 1978. The major allocations are earmarked to the Ministry of Education and Training--3.1 billion dirhams (up 0.4 billion); the Ministry of Defense--2.1 billion (up 0.2 billion); the Ministry of Interior--1.4 billion (up 0.2 billion); the Ministry of Finance--1.1 billion (unchanged); the Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform--0.6 billion; and the Ministry of Health--0.5 billion.

As regards capital outlays--8.7 billion dirhams for fiscal 1979 divided principally among the ministries of Finance, Defense, Equipment and National Revival, and Education and Training--supplementary credit authorizations were made for 1980 (7.3 billion dirhams) and 1981 (2.7 billion).

Special Treasury accounts--3.4 billion dirhams in revenues and 3.8 billion in expenses--include an allocation of 0.8 billion dirhams for capital participation in several companies (1.2 billion in 1978).

The finance law for fiscal 1979 introduced several modifications of a fiscal nature tending to increase budgetary revenues and encourage real estate construction. These changes bear essentially on the points listed below:

1. Levying of a 10 percent tax on the interest on foreign loans effected for the financing of Moroccan road transportation enterprises.
2. Granting a uniform 50 percent rebate to holding companies, the rebate henceforth being applied on the net profit pertinent to the return on capital and no longer on gross income.

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3. Increase from 3,000 to 6,000 dirhams a year of the tax exemption on salaries and wages and amendment of the range of the tax schedule from 12 to 44 percent divided into brackets (instead of from 6 to 36 percent).
4. Increase of the stamp dues from 4 to 10 percent on the payment of duties levied by the customs administration and doubling of the special tax on automobile vehicles with diesel engines (with the exception of pick-up type vehicles used in the agricultural sector).
5. Exemption for 5 years (instead of 3 years) from the municipal tax on housing built after 31 December 1978. This period is extended by 5 additional years at the rate of 50 percent of the said tax for buildings slated for rental.
6. Reduction of registration dues on the acquisition of vacant lots slated for the construction of personal dwellings.
7. Refund of interest to enterprises contracting loans from the National Housing Center for the construction of housing for profit in the framework of approved programs.

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MOROCCO

EXPANDED COOPERATION WITH FRANCE IN TOURISM, SPORTS

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 9 Feb 79 pp 310,311

[Article: "Cooperation with France for Tourism and Sports"]

[Text] Morocco and France concluded on 1 February 1979 in Rabat an agreement calling for the development of bilateral cooperation in all fields connected with tourism. It was signed on the French side by Jean-Pierre Soisson, minister of youth, sports, and leisure, and on the Moroccan side by Azzeddine Guessous, minister of tourism.

Under the terms of this agreement applicable for 5 years, the two sides set up a joint committee of experts slated to meet annually, alternatively in Paris and Rabat, for the solution of all problems susceptible to hinder a harmonious development of this cooperation.

Jean-Pierre Soisson, who during his visit met several Moroccan officials including the prime minister, Ahmed Osman, and the minister of foreign affairs, M'Hamed Boucetta, also held on 1 February 1979 in Rabat a working meeting with Abdelhafid Kariri, Moroccan minister of youth and sports, with whom he studied measures likely to extend the cooperation between the two countries in the field of sports and sports medicine. During this meeting Minister Soisson promised to send to Morocco shortly teams of doctors with various specialties as well as technical and pedagogical advisors regarding the youth.

Minister Kadiri outlined the needs of his country in the fields of sports medicine, the training of Moroccan sports cadres and trainers, and development motivation workers for youth. To meet this need Jean-Pierre Soisson proposed notably the following measures:

1. Establishment of institutional cooperation between the [French] National Institute of Sports and Physical Training and the [Morrocan] Royal Institute of Sports.
2. Involvement of Moroccan physicians in the promotion of a new sports medicine field in the context of the recent agreements signed between the ministry and Paris V University.

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3. Increase of the funds earmarked to technical assistance in the field of training of development motivation workers for youth.
4. Joint study of the problems of extracurricular sports development motivation workers, especially in the countryside.

Presiding with Jean-Pierre Soisson at the inaugural meeting of the joint Moroccan-French committee, Azzeddine Guessous recalled the effective contribution of the Moroccan tourist industry to balancing the balance of payments account (1.5 billion dirhams in 1977), to the creation of direct and indirect jobs (5 percent of the economically active population, that is about 250,000 jobs), and to the gross formation of fixed capital (1.3 billion dirhams during the last 5-year plan for 1973-77).

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MOROCCO

BRIEFS

EXPANSION OF MAROC-PHOSPHORE--Maroc-Phosphore [Moroccan Phosphorus Company] has just signed major agreements for the realization of so-called "fourth line" projects. These projects have the following goals: To increase the production capacity of the Maroc-Phosphore I plant from 459,000 tons of P 205-grade phosphorus to 660,000 tons of same year; to rebuild the fusion, filtration, and storage facilities for solid and liquid sulfur of the whole of Maroc-Chimie, Maroc-Phosphore I, and Maroc-Phosphore II so as to centralize the output and fusion for all the three plants. For this purpose Morocco secured loans from the World Bank and from Poland. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 9 Feb 79 p 311] 2662

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WESTERN SAHARA

BRIEFS

KHOMAYNI SUPPORTING POLISARIO--Before leaving France for Teheran, the Ayatollah Khomeini held a lengthy interview with a large delegation from the Polisario Front. He allegedly gave them "concrete" assurances on the subject of support from the government which he would subsequently appoint, support for the Saharan combatants in their struggle to regain their rights to independence. All the attempts made by King Hassan II to try to negotiate with the Ayatollah were in vain: "For me," the Iranian religious leader confided, "the two kings are alike: they oppress, exploit and massacre their people." It is generally expected that once the new Government in Teheran is stabilized, it will recognize the Polisario Front and later the Saharan Republic. This will mean one more success, and a considerable one, for the Polisario leaders. [Text] [Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French 19 Feb - 4 Mar 79 p 47] 8117

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